

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 RSR-01 /101 W
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R 050457 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3601

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 5502

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR JA US

SUBJECT: INITIAL JAPANESE MEDIA REPORTS AND
REACTION TO STATE OF WORLD MESSAGE

SUMMARY: JAPANESE MEDIA MAY 4-5 GAVE PROMINENT

COVERAGE TO PRESIDENT' S STATE OF WORLD MESSAGE,
STRESSING PORTION ON JAPAN. INITIAL REPORTS AND
EDITORIAL REACTION INDICATE INTENSE INTEREST IN
THIS BLUEPRINT FOR US FOREIGN POLICY, WITH
SOME TREPIDATION ABOUT EVOLUTION OF US-
JAPAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT' S STATE OF WORLD MESSAGE GIVEN
PROMINENT FRONT PAGE NEWS COVERAGE BY ALL
MAJOR DAILY PAPERS EVENING MAY 4, WITH FOCUS

ON JAPAN PORTION. ALL REPORTS HIGHLIGHTED
TOP PRIORITY ACCORDED SOLUTION OF US- JAPAN
ECONOMIC ISSUES, AND INCLUDED STATEMENT QTE
WITHOUT CONSCIOUS EFFORT OF POLITICAL WILL OUR
ECONOMIC DISPUTES COULD TEAR THE FABRIC OF ALL
ALLIANCE UNQTE. MOST EARLY REPORTS TENDED TO CONVEY

IMPRESSION THAT TONE OF JAPAN PORTION WAS SEVERE
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AND CRITICAL.

2. TV NEWS MORNING MAY 4 CARRIED INITIAL REPORTS OF MESSAGE IN ABSENCE OF MORNING PAPERS WHICH CUSTOMARILY NOT PUBLISHED DAY FOLLOWING HOLIDAY, CONSTITUTION DAY, MAY 3. EARLY TV REPORTS STRESSED LANGUAGE FOCUSED ON REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE DISRUPTION OF US- JAPAN ALLIANCE BY ECONOMIC ISSUES, AND MADE NO EFFORT TO REVIEW ENTIRE MESSAGE OR PLACE JAPAN PORTION IN CONTEXT.

3. UNUSUALLY QUICK EDITORIAL REACTION IN MORNING PRESS MAY 5, WHICH PROJECTED BROAD PERSPECTIVES THAN INITIAL NEWS REPORTS TENDED TO BE SOMEWHAT BETTER BALANCED. ASAHI EDITORIAL, FOR EXAMPLE, DEALT WITH WHOLE MESSAGE, NOTING REVIEW OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCH AS CEASEFIRE IN VIETNAM WAR, HISTORIC CHANGE IN US- PRC RELATIONS AND SERIES OF US- USSR AGREEMENTS BEFORE TURNING WITH SPECIAL INTEREST TO PORTIONS DEALING WITH EUROPE AND JAPAN. IN TRADITIONAL HORTATORY CONCLUSION OF EDITORIAL, ASAHI INDICATED DISAPPROVAL OF JAPANESE TENDENCY TO REACT IN EXCITEMENT TO REFERENCES BY OTHERS TO JAPAN'S FOREIGN POLICY STANCE, AND CITED INCREASED NEED FOR JAPAN'S PERCEPTION OF ITS PLACE IN WORLD.

4. STRONG NEGATIVE REVERBERATIONS MARKED SOME PRESS COMMENTARY TOKYO SHIMBUN EDITORIAL MAY5, FOR EXAMPLE,

VIEWED MESSAGE AS STRONG EXPRESSION OF US DISTRUST AND DISSATISFACTION WITH JAPANESE EFFORTS, AND SPECULATED THAT PRESIDENT INCLUDED LANGUAGE ON POSSIBLE DISRUPTION OF

ALLIANCE OVER ECONOMIC ISSUES TO PLEASE US GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS AND LABOR CIRCLES. WITH REFERENCE TO DEFENSE BURDEN SHARING, TOKYO SHIMBUN EXPRESSED VIEW THAT US NOT TRYING TO UNDERSTAND JAPAN'S PEACE DIPLOMACY AND DIFFICULTIES
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GOJ FACES IN DEALING WITH MILITARY BASE ISSUE. IT CAUTIONED SHARPLY THAT IF US CONTINUES TO PORTRAY JAPAN AS VILLAIN CAUSING ECONOMIC PROBLEM AT SAME TIME IT INSISTS ON STRENGTHENING US MILITARY BASE STRUCTURE IN JAPAN AND ON HAVING JAPAN ASSUME BURDEN OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES, THEN JAPANESE OPINION WOULD

INEVITABLY BECOME ANTI- AMERICAN. AT SAM TIME,
EDITORIAL ALSO STATED THAT JAPAN' S OWN
STOP- GAP MEASURES TO RECTIFY TRADE IMBAL-

ANCE AND INADEQUATE COOPERATION IN SECURITY
WHILE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF US PROTECTION ARE
RESPONSIBLE FOR AMERICAN DISSATISFACTION. IT CALLS
FOR DECISIVE ACTION IN ECONOMIC SECTOR. IN
SECURITY, IT FORESEES WORSENING OF US- JAPAN
RELATIONS UNLESS POLICIES CAN BE ADJUSTED AT THOSE
POINTS WHERE JAPAN' S PEACE LINE COINCIDES WITH US LINE.

5. ON BALANCE, DESPITE SOME FEELINGS OF DISMAH
OR RESENTMENT AT WHAT IS INTERPRETED AS HARSH
AND UNFRIENDLY CRITICISM BY US, INITIAL
JAPANESE PRESS REACTION HAS BEEN QUITE RESTRAINED
AND MODERATE. FULLER ANALYSIS OF JAPANESE
REACTION WILL BE FORTHCOMING AS IMPACT OF
MESSAGE ON BUSINESS, ACADEMIC AND OFFICIAL
CIRCLES BECOMES KNOWN.
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